

**REFLECTION for 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Fr. Don**

Our first reading reminds us that God declares that *'my word...will not return to me empty.'* In our stubborn human self-righteousness, we may try hard to thwart it but, God's will is more powerful than our will. We are really a stiff-necked people, like our ancestors, who constantly ignored/defied God; believing that they knew better than some distant divinity. In this respect, we have not progressed a lot as humans. We still defy God's will by rejecting God's love. It is difficult for humanity, in any age, to let God reign, to let go and let God.

Jesus knows his own people's history, so is not surprised by their lack of faith. The prophet Isaiah had encountered the same hardening of hearts. God challenges them for their lack of faith and their resistance to his message. His kingdom will come. St. Paul preaches about *'the glory about to be revealed to us... as we wait for adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.'* So, even if we disagree, God's kingdom is coming. Accepting this Gospel truth, we must become fertile soil ready to generously receive it with open hearts.

Jesus makes it clear from the beginning that he wants a greater openness to, and hunger for, the Word than that exhibited by the scribes and Pharisees. He calls for a change of heart, a listening with the ears of the heart. Yet, they appear not to understand him. If they hear, then they do not act correctly. See, Christian apathy goes back a long way. Jesus seeks to stop the cycle of apathy and desires us to be come the good soil.

To be fully alive in Christ requires an act of faith and a generous response to Jesus' call. If we were to call for a show of hands, none of us would want to be planted on the path, on the rocky ground, or among the thorns. We want to be firmly planted in the rich soil. Having such understanding is the only way our hearts can be opened and freed from the devil's grip. The old fraudster rejoices in our wavering acceptance of the Word of God. His work is accomplished when we crumble under testing, and allow the cares of the world, and the lure of riches, to choke us. He hates those planted in that rich soil, it contains nutrients that poison him.

Thank God for spiritual richness. But what does it take to produce that rich soil? How can we open our very selves to grow the seed sown by Jesus so that it *'bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty?'* These are sixty-four thousand-dollar questions. So, answers please!

First, we can gain strength by reflecting upon Jesus' own faith. His willingness to die, as the grain of wheat dies, and face the anguish of the cross produced the rich harvest of the new creation brought about through the resurrection. Imitate Jesus. Accepting and bearing life's challenges, refusing to lose hope, trusting in God, and knowing that suffering produces perseverance, all these traits show we espouse the rich soil of faith.

Second, we are called to till our hearts and souls to become rich soil by prayer and meditation on how God worked through early Christian communities. They are our examples; they grew into bastions of faith despite the persecutions they endured. Many took the St. Paul approach- *'I consider that the sufferings of this present age are not worth comparing'* to the hope richly planted deep within them. There is a life lesson worth remembering and embracing. In the face of disappointment and injustice, it is important to recognise such abundant harvests are possible. Life is a series of forays into mission fields, calling us to till with love.

Third, God's kingdom does not grow better/ bigger without divine intervention. No one knows how it will come, only God. It is a mystery. We learn that though it all, we would be foolish not to hope for a generous response to Jesus' call. Growth comes not just when the church is prosperous/triumphant, but more often when she is weaker/persecuted. God graciously produces rich soil when we are *'poor in spirit.'*

For our faith and our church will grow if we allow the power of God to enter humble hearts who have faith that God can produce the rich harvest. Let us be those *who hear the Word and understand it.*

# Sacred Heart Parish

## **A Stewardship Parish in Love with Christ**



### Parish Information

Parish Administrator: Fr. Don Leonard

Office Hours: Mon, Wed, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Tues, Thurs 1:00 pm to 5 pm.

465 Curling Street

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**Weekend Masses:** Saturday 4:30 pm, Sunday 11:00 am

**Reconciliation:** Wednesday after Mass, or by request

**Mass During the Week:** Wed, Thurs at 7:00 pm, Fri at 10 am

**Holy Hour of Adoration:** Third Sunday of the Month at 2 p.m.

**Marriages:** Six months' notice is required. A year's notice is recommended.

**Baptisms:** Celebrated at Weekend Mass after preparation session.

**July 16, 2017**

**Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**RECEIVED WITH THANKS** (July 8, 9)

Regular Collection	\$ 1482.30
Parish Dues	\$ 100.00
Building Fund	\$ 48.00
Cemetery Fund	\$ 60.00
Votive Candles	\$ 100.00
Garden Party Donations	\$ 105.00
Mass Requests	\$ 100.00
St Vincent de Paul Donations	\$ 80.00

**MASS INTENTIONS**

July 17	No Mass
July 18	Cemetery Mass in Benois Cove
July 19	Mary Leonard
July 19+	James & Anne Birmingham
July 20	Jaimie Brake
July 21	Nora Griffin
July 22	Robert Ozon
July 22+	Dorothy & James Quigley
July 23	Parish Community

**LITURGICAL MINISTERS** (July 22, 23)

**READERS**                      **EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS**

Victoria Murphy      Joan Penney, Eileen Moore,  
Linda Tarbett              Marie Byrne

**Communion to the Sick** Joan Penney

**Wayne Dicks**      **Donna Mitchell, Margaret Dalley**  
**Amelia Dicks**              **Donna Eldridge**

**THANK YOU**

Volunteers are a blessing. The Parish expresses gracious thanks to all who worked to clean-up our Cemetery. The Cross looks beautiful. May God bless your efforts on our behalf.

**NEW MINISTRIES SCHEDULE AVAILABLE**

Because our present schedule ends in a few weeks, we have prepared one for the rest of August and September. This will allow Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers to be in place until the transition of priests is complete and Parish Council starts up again.

**CHURCH TO BE RE- CARPETED THIS WEEK**

Work begins this coming week. There may be some mess but we hope it will be minimal. Thank

you to all who helped prepare for this by tearing up the old carpet and tidying up.

**AN INVITATION- MASS/SOCIAL Saturday, July 29**

This celebration of Fr. Don’s retirement will take place in **Benoit’s Cove. It begins with Mass at 6 pm and is followed by a lunch/ social downstairs in the parish hall.** This is a joint celebration by both parishes. We hope members of Sacred Heart Parish will come down and join us in saying good-bye and thank-you to Fr. Don.

**BIBLE STUDY**

The group will next meet in the Parish house on **Monday evening, July 17 at 7 pm.** We welcome newcomers to join us in ‘breaking open the Word.’

**TABERNACLE ART WORK FOR SALE**

We have three of the medium prints left. These sell for \$45.00. To order one, please sign the sheets which are available at the back.

**OUR CHURCH HISTORY PHOTOS**

We have prepared all the photos which you have provided over the past few years. We are looking for some showing CWL activities for the 10 years it thrived in our parish. As well, we need some for Scouts and Guides, and any others showing parish events through the years.

**FEAST OF ST. ANN/QUALIPU MASS**

We are hosting this special celebration with a 4:30 pm Mass on Wednesday July 26. The Qalipu First Nation Band will take a prominent part in the Mass. It will be followed by a Soup/Stew and sandwich supper in the parish house. Please join us and the Band to honor good St. Ann.

**CEMETERY MASS IN BENOITS COVE**

This **Tuesday July 18 at 7 pm** in the old cemetery. A short prayer service will follow in the new cemetery

**CEMETERY MASSES UPTOWN**

Townsite Cemetery – **Monday July 25 at 7 pm**  
Mt. Patricia – **Wednesday July 26 at 7 pm**

In the event of rain, these Cemetery Masses will be celebrated in their respective Parish Church.

**CEMETERY RECORD FOR UNKNOWN**

We have many unmarked gravesites. This summer we are asking families with loved ones buried in unmarked graves at Mt. Cecilia to submit their names. We plan to erect a large memorial plaque displaying these names. It is the best option for memorializing them available to us. Please support this effort.

**ST. VINCENT de PAUL SOCIETY**

The Society is still looking for new members. And there is a need for used furniture. Call: 638-9010 for more information. They thank you for your generous support of their 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday collections.

**FEAST of ST. MARY MAGDALENE JULY 22**

Mary Magdalene was one of the women who traveled with Jesus and the Apostles, and was present at the cross. She also was the one chosen to bring the good news of the resurrection to the Apostles. She has been a victim of mistaken identity for almost 20 centuries. Yet she would no doubt insist that it makes no difference. We are all sinners in need of the saving power of God, whether our sins have been lurid or not. More importantly, we are all, with her, unofficial witnesses of the Resurrection

**FEAST of ST. APOLLINARIS JULY 20**

He lived as a Bishop in Italy around the year 80 AD. He was persecuted for proclaiming the faith and eventually killed. Following Jesus involves risks— sometimes the risk of life itself. Martyrs are people who would rather accept death than deny the cornerstone of their whole life: faith in Jesus Christ. Everyone will die eventually—the persecutors and those persecuted. The question is what kind of a conscience people will bring before the Lord for judgment. Remembering the witness of past and present martyrs can help us make the sacrifices that following Jesus today may require.

**PRAYER- EBB and Flow by HENRI NOUWEN**

Dear Lord,  
You are the sea. Although I experience many ups and downs in my emotions and often feel great shifts and changes in my inner life, you remain the same.

Your sameness is not the sameness of a rock, but the sameness of a faithful lover.

Out of your love I came to life;  
by your love I am sustained,  
and to your love I am always called back.

There are days of sadness and days of joy;  
there are feelings of guilt and feelings of gratitude;  
there are moments of failure and moments of success; but all of them are embraced by your unwavering love.

My only real temptation is to doubt in your love, to think of myself as beyond the reach of your love, to remove myself from the healing radiance of your love.

To do these things is to move into the darkness of despair. O Lord, sea of love and goodness, let me not fear too much the storms and winds of my daily life, and let me know that there is ebb and flow, but that the sea remains the sea.

*Amen*



**JESUS PRAYER**

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,  
have mercy on me, a sinner